wso oll #203 group interview

Project I.D. No. 3 (SOLO)

NAME: Takatsuki, Tome DATE OF BIRTH: 6/4/1891 PLACE OF BIRTH: Ehime
Age: 78 Sex: F Marital Status: W Education: Teacher's College

PRE-WAR:
Date of arrival in U.S.: 6/16/15 Age: 24 M.S. ____ Port of entry: Seattle
Occupation/s: 1. Teacher 2. Dressmaker 3. ____
Place of residence: 1. Sacramento, Ca. 2. ____ 3. ____
Religious affiliation: Christian Church
Community organizations/activities: ____

EVACUATION:
Name of assembly center: Walerga Assembly Center
Name of relocation center: Tule Lake, Ca. & Topaz, Utah
Dispensation of property: Friends' home Names of bank/s: ____
Jobs held in camp: 1. ____ 2. ____
Jobs held outside of camp: ____
Left camp to go to: Sacramento, California

POST-WAR:
Date returned to West Coast: Before the end of war
Address/es: 1. Sacramento, Ca. (16th & W St.) 2. Hawaii (1 yr)
3. Came back to Sacramento, Ca.
Religious affiliation: Christian Church
Activities: 1. ____ 2. ____ 3. ____
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: ____

Name of interviewer: Linda Yasumura Date: 5/1969 Place: Sacramento, Ca.

Translator Linda Yasumura

Name: Tome Takatsuki

Age: 78 years old

Birthdate: June 4, 1891

Birthplace: Ehime Ken

Came to the US: Durint the World War I

Major Occupation: School Teacher

Relocation Camp: Tule Lake

Interviewer: Linda Yasumura
Interview Date: May, 1969
Place of Interview: Sacramento, Calif.

Translator: Linda Yasumura
Typist: Linda Yasumura

Tome [illegible] #3

I was born in Ehime-Ken, Nishiwagun, Yahatahamamura on June 4, 1891. I came to the United States during World War I. My husband was in the produce business. In the beginning Jyutaro Ryugo, Kichitaro Hiroda, and my husband worked as partners, but as the business expanded it was made into a corporation. Since the produce business has to satisfy the farmers, he put many farmers as the stock holders.

My family is Zenshu Buddhist. When I was small I had a friend who went to the Christian church, so I went to the Sunday school. I am a graduate of the first Girls Teachers College in Ehime-Ken, and went to work at Kameyama School. The principal was conscientious in regards to education and was an outstanding person, so this Kameyama School became the highest standard school. Shortly thereafter my older sister persuaded me to come to the United States. Her name is Nui Takahashi, and she is five years my senior. She is also a graduate of the Teachers College in Ehime-Ken, and came to the United States. She was a Japanese school teacher in Marysville.

When I came to the United States I traveled first class on Akimaru Ship. I did not have much money to travel first class, but the office of this shipline company gave me a special rate for a round trip ticket.

This ship left for Japan from Seattle and returned to Seattle. I arrived in Seattle on June 16, 1915. I came to Sacramento from Seattle by train. It was a hot season at that time, and I thought of Sacramento as a hot place. We did not stop in Hawaii because this ship did not stop in Hawaii. On April 26, 1920, I went back to Japan with my sister and her two children to visit my ill strickened mother. Fortunately my mother recovered her health. We stayed in Japan for about 6 months. The weather and food in Japan were so different that four year-old child died, and we were very sad.

I was taught that Japan, the Imperial country, was a large country, but when my neighbors and friends did not know where Japan was, I was extremely disappointed.

As I have mentioned before, my husband was in a produce business. He worked from two and not later than three O'Clock in the morning, and while the people were sleeping he made a big profit. He then came home for the breakfast and napped for about thirty minutes and changed his clothes to make his round at each retail store in Sacramento for the orders.

The automobiles were scarce at that time, but due to my husband's big business he owned an automobile. He used a wagon to deliver the vegetables

and fruits to each of the retail stores. As I have already mentioned he was a hard-working man and was economical. My husband was not educated, but he studied English on his own with the book titled "The National Leader". He was able to take the orders and communicate with the Caucasian retail stores and was able to carry on the business for many years.

I went to Japan, and I stayed with my sister's family in Marysville for one month. I was lonesome. With my sister's help I was able to get a teaching position at Sakura Gakuen in Sacramento. There were only ten students at that time, but the number increased so I received some helpers. Since there were no automobiles I went after the students and brought them to school by hand, and walked each of them home by hand. Then after two years, I quit Sakura Gakuen, and went to McDowell Sewing School in San Francisco to study the sewing. At that time I worked as a school girl in a Caucasian family. After I came home, after the graduation, I decided to work as a dress maker. My sister at that time, after returning to Sacramento, my older sister was a Japanese school teacher in Yolo so we visited ~~with~~ eachother frequently, so after coming to America, I did not experience loneliness.

Since I taught school for the period of fifteen years, Japan recog-

nized me as a hero and I received a certificate, a cup, and a flower vase. It was on February 11, 1939.

Before I obtained my citizenship, we decided to buy a house. We bought a house in 1920. At that time a person name McClatchy, a Sacramento Bee owner was here, and he was extremely prejudice, and did not like the Oriental people. When we bought a house, he severely criticized us. . . "A Jap bought a house! This family has twelve children. They must not live here!" He publicized us in the newspaper and we were scared. The real estate salesman was extremely afraid and came ~~to beg~~ begging to us, "Please return this house. If you do not return this house, I will lose my license and I will not be able to continue the business." We did not know what to do. At that time my husband was working in a market business and there was a person name Mrs. Monroe who was nice to the Japanese people. She had thirty acres of land in Oak Park area and had many Japanese farmers on her land, so she understood the feelings of the Japanese people. I went to her place to consult. When we explained to her of our situation, she said, "Oh, you were the people who were attacked by the newspaper. Don't worry, we will go and see your place. Don't reveal our acquaintance to anyone. She and the real estate man came to see our place. When they

looked at our place up and down, she said, "Since this is a rundown house, return this house. Where do you want to live? If there is any nice house we will find one for you." She said it to us kindly, so we asked her for a nice location. There was on 16th and W Street a two block lot, and its owner suddenly had to go back to East and wanted to sell the lot for a cash. Mrs. Monroe bought it for a cash and since we did not have any money we arranged to pay for it on an easy payment. We built a new house on the lot. When the house was finally built and we moved in, the neighbors descriminated us, "If Japs move in, our property value will decrease so it will cause a big problem." Mrs. Monroe and her daughter May were wise people so they instantly responded, "All right, these Japanese people have no children, are clean, quiet, and educated, and if you don't want them, I will sell this place to a Negro family with seven or eight boys." The neighbors then said,"Please don't say such a thing and let those Japanese people live here." We were then finally able to settle there.

We became Christians in 1919 by receiving the Baptism with Mr. and Mrs. Aoki. Then the depression period came, and we went through three bank closures and suffered greatly. Nineteen hundred and thirty three was the deep depression, and all the banks in Sacramento were closed. At that

time we were in a driving market business on our own. We were short of (buying money), but after a while the banks reopened so money came into our hands. During this depression the Sacramento Growers Market owned by Takatsuki was a large business, and had leased hundreds of acres in Davis for planting the lettuce crops. The water ~~had salt~~ was alkaline so the crops failed and we had a big loss. The depression came and we went bankrupt. We decided to open the driving market again for the second time. When World War II came, the people who were teaching the school, like the principal, were taken by the FBI one by one so we who were teaching until the evacuation period were worried that the FBI will take us any minute. I was not afraid to be taken to the camp, but because I am a woman I wanted to put the house in order myself rather than to leave it to my husband or to my neice who may not have understood what to do, so I was afraid of FBI to come after me. The teachers in Sacramento were not taken by FBI. The Caucasian neighbors like Italians and Portuguese were kind and sympathetic.

When we finally had to evacuate to the camp, the people in JACL made the arrangement for us. At first we went to Walaga for a brief period. We then were transferred to Tule Lake. At that time there were many watchmen, and they treated us as if we were a herd of horses or cows as we lined

up into one line boarding onto the bus. When we entered Tule Lake Camp nothing was built yet. There was not a thing for us to sit down on, so each of us received some lumbers to make our own tables and chairs. After we were settled for a while the people who were loyal to Japan began to agitate, so Tule Lake Camp became the place for those who were loyal to Japan, and our family was transferred to Topaz. My sister's family was in Topaz, so we were sent there. At that time my nephew was already a dentist. He said, "Those people in Tule Lake Camp who are loyal to Japan can agitate, but I feel that America is my country so I want to enlist in the Army," so he volunteered. Prior to that when he first entered the camp, he wanted to enlist in the Navy, so he went to take the test for the Navy in San Diego, but at that time because he was of the Japanese descent he was descriminated. He came back disappointed without taking the test, and entered the camp. Before we entered Topaz he was called by the Army, and he happily went to Mississippi. His name is George Takahashi, my nephew and a son of my older sister. He joined 442nd and was sent to Italy. At that time we were extremely worried about him, hoping that he will not be bombed in the sea on the way to Italy. We soon heard from him informing us of his safe arrival. We were much relieved.

In Topaz Camp we became students under Professor Tsumori to learn the calligraphy. During the day we attended English class. We spent our busy days in English and calligraphy classes. During the internment period in Tule Lake Camp we studied the formal flower arrangement for a recreation under Professor Taizan. There was a community church in the camp, and all the various religions were combined into one, and the services were held on Sundays. Since all the Japanese people were congregated in one place, a choir was formed. The ministers deligently delivered the sermons trying not to lose our interests. We were released from the camp before the end of the war, and we returned to Sacramento. Mrs. Monroe was already ~~was~~ deceased so Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Monroe's daughter, met us at S. P. Depot. We had a Chrysler automobile and it was left with the Clarks, and so were all of our belongings. We stayed at Clark's home. The war was not yet over. We stayed at the Clarks for one month. When the war finally ended, the Chinatown celebrated the occasion loudly with drums, and I was very sad. Before we were release from the camp we were not allowed to obtain the citizenship, but after we were released from the camp we were told that we were able to obtain the citizenship, so we went to William Land School daily to take the citizenship study course. On December 7, 1953,

I finally obtained my citizenship. I was very happy. After we were released from the camp, instead of teaching again, I did the housework for living. While I was doing the housework I developed a breast cancer in 1956. I was afraid, and went to see Dr. Hashiba in Fresno, and I was operated. Fortunately I recovered, and for 14 years now I have been living in good health without the reoccurence of cancer. I lost my husband in 1961 due to a cancer, so I was very lonesome. Since I had no children, I felt at lost as how to go on living. My neice in Hawaii invited ~~my~~ me to live with her so I won't be lonesome. I sold my house and moved to Hawaii. I lived there for one year. I did not know the people there and the environment was foreign to me. I was lonely there so I decided to return to Sacramento. There was a World's Fair, Expo, in New York, so I came back to Sacramento via New York. Since I did not have my house any more, I moved into this apartment. At that time after coming back from New York, I decided not to go back to Hawaii.

I do not have any children, and I wanted to help someone. At that time my sister's husband was strickened ill and was living with four children. They all were of school age. At that time Shogo was a freshman in college, so he was thinking of quitting college and work to save money for

his education. "I do not want you to lose your knowledge, so I will help you. Since I have no children please pay me back the money when you are finished with school and working. I do not want any interest, so pay me back the amount I loaned you. I myself do not like to borrow money or bother people, so money is important to me, so I would like the money back." He studied teaching. It was a four-year course before, but it was changed to six years. He borrowed a large sum of money. He went in the Army and entered a business, and payed the money back to me in small payments. The one who is the dentist was a captain when he went to Italy, but now he is a colonel. He is a dentist in San Manteo. I have always thought of doing things for others. My younger sister's husband's home in Japan was burned by America's bomb, and their younger daughter was finished with high school. She wanted to continue her education, but was unable to do so since her father was deceased. "I will arrange for you to come to America to attend school. You may come if you are willing to work at any kind of work. If you are depending entirely on uncle and aunt, please do not come." She responded, "I will work at any kind of work." I payed all her expenses, and called for her. She attended Sacramento City College for 2 years. She was fortunately an intelligent girl

and since there was no other course for her to take, she transferred to University of California. She received a scholarship at that time. This girl's name is Kazue and she studied chemical engineering, and graduated with honor. After her graduation, she entered the graduate study, and she went to Philadelphia with a scholarship. She received a master's degree in one year. She was hired by a chemical engineering company in Chattanooga, and worked there for two to three years. She then went to work at a big chemical engineering company in New York. It was at that thime that I went to the World's Fair and stayed with her for a while. I have been well since then. After returning from Hawaii I heard about the adult education at William Land School, so I enrolled there. On June 13, 1968 I received my high school diploma.

When we were evacuated the Japanese town people, the home owners, thought that they were not able to use their names to purchase a house, so they used their children's names or of their friends.who had the American citizenship. They were at lost as to what to do at that time. There was a real estate establishment named Artz and Cook. The person name Artz was a bad man. I heard from many people that they lost their homes due to his dishonest transactions.

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My husband's partner, Hirozawa, had a pretty house next to Ranch Wagon on Broadway. They had a close Caucasian friend name Mary Martin. Since they were close friends during the evacuation, they bought a house under a joint ownership with Mary Martin, and then evacuated to the camp. Mrs. Hirozawa's husband died of a heart attack in the camp, so she returned home alone. At that time Mary Martin, working together with a lawyer, persuaded Mrs. Hirozawa to sign the papers releasing the ownership. The persons name Masaki and Mrs. Ijima were close friends of Mrs. Hirozawa, and they visited her frequently to inquire, "Is everything all right with the house? Are all the papers in order?" Mrs. Hirozawa responded, "Oh, don't worry. I have everything in order." Soon after that she became ill and was admitted to the County Hospital. One day a minister informed Mrs. Ijima, "Oh, there is a Japanese lady name Mrs. Hirozawa, and why doesn't she have any Japanese visitor?" She responded, "Oh, I didn't know that she was hospitalized," and payed her a visit. She was already far advanced in her disease. Mrs. Mary Martin tried not to inform the Japanese people about Mrs. Hirozawa's illness, and she finally passed away. After her death Mrs. Mary Martin took over her house and her belongings, like the jewèlries, and did not share any of it with Mrs. Hiro-

zawa's relatives. Since Mrs. Hirozawa, like myself, had no children, I am sure that she would have wanted to have her nephews, neices, and Mr. Hirozawa's children to have some of her belongings, but Mrs. Mary Martin kept them all to herself. She is still living. One day she looked me up and visited me. I told her that I was busy and did not invite her in. I did not want to associate with her.

We the Isseis felt that to be a burden to someone else or to receive the grants from the government was a shame. When we came from Japan, we came only with the bare necessities, and we all worked hard. Eventually those people in Sacramento opened the businesses or worked on the farms. The young mothers did not go out to work until the children were old enough. They stayed at home and took care their businesses, and waited for the children to come home from school. They economized on the clothes and food, and strived to remain economically independent. This is the characteristic of the Japanese people. . . work hard to save money.

addendum

Takatsuki, TOME
These 2 pages are part of interview, + don't appear in final Journal

And this person Mrs. Monroe/used to hire some Japanese farmers and understood the feeling of Japanese very well.

Was it Mrs. Monroe? (see pg 5 for reminder's narrative)

Yes. Many Japanese used to know her. My husband was in produce business and when the harvest time came, Mrs. Monroe and her child came to us with their station wagon. When I came to the United States, there were not so many automobiles yet. Since Mrs. Monroe brought produce with her wagon, my husband became dependent upon her. Mrs. Monroe passed away. Her daughter married a man whose name was Mr. Clark and she had been our advisor until she died last year.

Q. Well, let's go back here a little bit. Would you tell me something about the Depression? Do you know what extent Japanese received damage due to depression?

Oh, that depression. All the banks were closed in 1933 and our grower, too, stopped their business (?), so we had our own drive-in market. Since all the banks were closed, we could not even draw money we need as capital for our business. At that time most Japanese in Sacramento were engaged in some sort of business unlike today that many Japanese are doing housework or work of that kind. Therefore I think Japanese were in trouble at that time.

Do you remember what sort of damage were created by depression to Japanese?

Well, I do not think any Japanese went bankrupt.because banks opened a little later. However, for a while we were really in brouble.

Did you get your money back which you had deposited at a bank?

Yes. We all got out money back later. Since we are Japanese, we used Japanese banks and these banks were all closed as well as American banks. We lost some money twice or three times. At that

time, for business we used the American bank, so we could do our business again when it opened up later.

Did you say you lost all the money you had deposited at a bank?

No, it was stopped from being drawn for a while. Banks did not open. As we needed some capital for everyday business, we had some trouble. But there were people who loaned money tp us with some interest, which was greatful to us. Becuase of depression some Japanese were in trouble, but they must have stood up and done their efforts to restore their businesses since they were Japanese.

Q. Mrs. Hayashi, do you remember the depression of 1933?

Yes. Was it 1933? Well, I already forgot it.

Q. Don't you remember what kind of things you experienced at that time?

(Takatsuki) Weren't you doing farming at that time?

Oh, was it after my hasband passed away?

(Takatsuki) Then, you must have struggled with difficulties.

My hasband died in 1925. It was February 24th. The depression came afterward, I think. I heard about it, but I did not feel anything particularly since I did not have any business and were spending everyday with my children.

(Takatsuki) Only those who were doing business got in trouble a little bit.